

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 4404

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV YO

SUBJECT: KARDELJ AS PERMANENT VICE PRESIDENT?

1. SUMMARY: RUMOR CURRENTLY CIRCULATING IN BELGRADE SAYS YUGOSLAV LEADERSHIP IS NOW SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING CREATION OF PERMANENT VICE PRESIDENT SLOT, WHICH WOULD BE FILLED BY KARDELJ. LEADERSHIP MAY BE PLANNING TO USE HIM AFTER TITO GOES AS IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN INTER-REPUBLIC TEAM. END SUMMARY

2. WESTERN DIPLOMAT HAS VOLUNTEERED TO EMBOFFS INFORM AORON HE SAYS COMES FROM SOURCE "VERY CLOSE TO TITO" WHO HAS PROVED MOST RELIABLE IN PAST: TOP LEADERSHIP NOW CONSIDERING GIVING EDVARD KARDELJ (MEMBER LCY PRESIDUM, FOREMOST IDEOLOGUE, LONGTIME TITO CONFIDENT) NEW POSITION OF PERMANENT (I.E., UNTIL TITO'S DEATH) VICE PRESIDENT OF YUGOSLAVIA.

3. THIS INFORMATION, CIRCULATING WIDELY IN DIPLOMATIC RUMOR MILL, IS GIVEN PLAUSIBILITY BY PROMINENT YUGOSLAV JURIST WHO CONFIRMED TO AMB THAT IDEA IS UNDER CONSIDERATION. HE ADDED THAT IN HIS OPINION IT WOULD MAKE SENSE TO GET AWAY FROM CONCEPT OF ROTATING VICE PRESIDENT JOB WITHIN STATE PRESIDENCY MEMBERSHIP.

4. LOGICAL ADDENDUM TO THIS STORY, WHICH WE ARE NOW HEARING, HAS IT THAT PUTTING KARDELJ IN SUCH POSITION MEANS THAT STANE DOLANC --  
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LIKE KARDELJ A SLOVENE -- WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP HIS JOB OF SECRETARY

OF LCY EXECUTIVE BUREAU (BUT PRESUMABLY NOT BEFORE TIME OF TENTH LCY CONGRESS NEXT YEAR). RUMORED AS PROSPECTIVE DOLANC REPLACEMENT IS DJURO KLADARIN, MEMBER SFRY PRESIDENCY (FROM CROATIA).

5. COMMENT: NOTWITHSTANDING REPORT THAT SOURCE OF INFORMATION IS CLOSE TO TITO, STORY AT THIS JUNCTURE IS SPECULATIVE. CERTAINLY THERE HAVE BEEN OBVIOUS EFFORTS IN RECENT MONTHS TO BUILD UP KARDELJ'S IMAGE AND PRESTIGE. HE HAS MADE MANY SPEECHES, WRITTEN ARTICLES RECEIVING MORE PRESS ATTENTION THAN IN PAST, GIVEN SERIES OF TV INTERVIEWS ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS (BELGRADE A-275), AND RECEIVED FAIRLY CONSISTENT BILLING NEXT TO TITO AT EVENTS WHERE BOTH HAVE BEEN PRESENT (MOST RECENTLY AT ALGIERS SUMMIT AND TITO'S RECEPTION OF KOSYGIN ON BRIONI). WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT COLLECTIVE PRESIDENCY APPROACH WOULD BE SCRAPPED ALTOGETHER.

6. PRINCIPAL RATIONALE FOR PRESIDENCY CONCEPT WHEN FORMALIZED TWO YEARS AGO WAS THAT REPUBLICS COULD NOT BE PRESSURED INTO COOPERATING AFTER TITO DEPARTS THE SCENE BUT WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO HOLD FEDERAL STRUCTURE TOGETHER BY GIVING EACH A DIRECT STAKE IN FUTURE EXECUTIVE BODY WITH DECISIONS TAKEN BY FREE "CONSENSUS". SINCE THEN STRENGTHENED FEDERAL PARTY APPARATUS HAS BROUGHT ABOUT GREATER DEGREE OF CENTRALIZED AUTHORITY. LEADERSHIP MAY NOW FEEL THAT COUNTRY HAS BETTER CHANCE OF WEATHERING POST-TITO STORMS UNDER A TRUSTED, KNOWN QUANTITY RATHER THAN BY PLACING SO MUCH RESPONSIBILITY ON WHOEVER HAPPENS TO OCCUPYING VICE PRESIDENT SEAT WHEN TITO GOES. BUT WE BELIEVE POST-TITO PARLI AND GOVERNMENT WILL STILL NEED THE SUPPORT FROM ALL PARTS OF COUNTRY WHICH COLLEGIUM APPROACH CAN OFFER. KARDELJ MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE PRIMUS INTER PARES BUT STILL DEPENDENT TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON SUPPORT OF OTHERS IN FUTURE COLLECTIVE PRESIDENCY BODY. TO DO AWAY ENTIRELY WITH CONCEPT OF SHARED LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES AT THIS TIME WOULD AMOUNT TO SORT OF SHOCK TO REGIONAL NATIONALITY SENSIBILITIES WE BELIEVE LEADERSHIP WOULD WISH TO AVOID.

7. KARDELJ APPEARS TO POSSESS LITTLE OF THE CHARISMA NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH ANYONE IN STRONGMAN POSITION. AN IDEOLOGIST AND THEORETICIAN, HE HAS NOT BEEN ACTIVE IN PRACTICAL POLITICS FOR YEARS. ON OTHER HAND, HE IS BEST-KNOWN FIGURE FROM PARTISAN DAYS, ASIDE FROM TITO HIMSELF, TO HAVE SURVIVED POLITICALLY TO PRESENT DAY. HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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SENIORITY AND STATURE THROUGHOUT COUNTRY HAVE NO RIVAL. KARDELJ WAS FEDERAL VICE PRESIDENT AFTER WAR (1946-53) AND VICE PRESIDENT OF FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CABINET) FOR TEN YEARS AFTER THAT. HE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN TITO'S MOST TRUSTED LIEUTENANT THROUGHOUT PAST THIRTY YEARS. HE IS AUTHOR OF MOST OF IDEOLOGY (E.E., SELF-MANAGEMENT) REQUIRED TO PUT TITO'S PRAGMATIC POLICIES ON SOUND CONSTITUTIONAL/DOCTRINAL BASIS. KARDELJ CAN BE COUNTED ON TO WORK FOR CONTINUANCE OF TITOISM AFTER TITO IF HE IS IN POSITION OF SOME POWER AT

TIME TITO GOES. AS SUCH, HE MAY WELL BE LOOKED ON AS ASSET TOO VALUABLE FOR SECONDARY ROLE MORE SUITED TO LESSER COLLEAGUES.

8. IN SUM, KARDELJ LOOKS LIKE BEST SYMBOL OF TITOIST LEGITIMACY NECESSARY TO A VIABLE YUGOSLAV LEADERSHIP IN IMMEDIATE POST-TITO PERIOD. BUT HIS APPARENT PREFERENCE FOR IDEOLOGICAL PURSUITS OVER TAKING ACTIVIST OR ORGANIZING ROLE, UNLIKELINESS OF HIS FILLING ROLE, OF "NEW TITO", ALL ARGUE FOR KARDELJ'S BEING APRT OF A TEAM -- PERHAP S WITH TOP RANK -- RATHER THAN FOR HIS BEING ANOINTED SOLE HEIR OF TITO WITH COLLECTIVE EXECUTIVE APPROACH BEING SCRAPPED ENTIRELY. TOON

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